

## Thompson & Knight Launches Energy Consulting Company

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The law firm of Thompson & Knight LLP has announced the formation of a subsidiary company that will provide energy consulting services to the international marketplace. Thompson & Knight Global Energy Services, LLC will offer a wide range of specialized services to the energy industry including the identification and assessment of exploration and production investment opportunities, asset evaluations, portfolio optimization, and risk mitigation.

The company will be based in Houston and led by Renato T. Bertani, the former president of Petrobras America Inc. Mr. Bertani has held a number of senior-level positions during his 30-year career with the Brazilian-owned energy conglomerate. Most recently he has been responsible for an aggressive series of initiatives by Petrobras to explore and develop new production capabilities in the Gulf of Mexico, as well as the company's acquisition and planned expansion of a major refinery in Pasadena, Texas.

"We are very pleased to establish this new business that reinforces our longstanding commitment to helping our clients with their strategic issues," says Pete Riley, managing partner of Thompson & Knight. "At Thompson & Knight we currently represent nearly half of the world's largest publicly traded energy companies and a host of oil and gas firms and related entities. This move further expands and differentiates our services and our position in the global energy industry," he says.

Initially the company's portfolio of commercial and economic consulting services will be preferentially offered to existing Thompson & Knight clients, according to Mr. Bertani. "We believe there is great interest among the firm's clients in leveraging complementary and integrated services, particularly given the growth perspectives of the energy industry," he says. Mr. Bertani anticipates that services will gradually expand to new customers, provided there are no competitive conflicts.

Mr. Riley believes Thompson & Knight is the first U.S. law firm to have an ancillary business focused on global energy consulting. Surveys indicate that these separate endeavors are growing steadily in popularity as law firms seek complementary services for their clients, but it is unclear exactly how many ancillary businesses are owned by law firms. A 2003 study by Hildebrandt International found that 95 of the nation's largest law firms were operating approximately 140 ancillary businesses, primarily in the fields of information technology, investment management, and public affairs.

Since 1887, Thompson & Knight LLP has consistently made a positive impact on its clients' successes. With its practice focused on the energy industry, the Firm has extensive resources in litigation, tax, insolvency, and international energy matters. The Firm has approximately 420 attorneys and offices and alliances in Algiers, Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, London, Mexico City, Monterrey, New York, Paris, Rio de Janeiro, and Vitória. Thompson & Knight represents companies, government entities, and individuals in local, regional, and national markets around the world.

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